6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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cally disaffected class, there emerges a formidable grouping of unstable and potentially revolutionary elements in present-day Greek society. The more conservative groups – farmers of the plains villages, shopkeepers, traders and property owners in the towns, and the handful of rich shipowners and other large capitalists – certainly outweigh the dissidents in normal times. But times have seldom been normal in recent Greek history, and the balance of forces has not uniformly inclined in favor of the established social order.

Public Life in 1947

The winter and spring of 1946–47 were months when the balance turned strongly against conservatism. As a matter of fact, Greece seemed then to teeter on the verge of Communist revolution. The Greek Communist party, acting in concert with the Communist governments and parties of neighboring countries to the north, and with the approval or perhaps under the instructions of the Russians, began to raise guerrilla bands in the mountains of Greece in the summer of 1946. Organizers met with rather quick response in many hill villages, where the young men and boys were stewing in their discontent and welcomed the high hopes held out to them by Communist promises. The national army was quite unable to check the spread of the guerrilla movement. For one thing, morale was uncertain. Many soldiers felt strong distaste for fighting fellow Greeks. When sallies were made from strong points which the army had constructed, the guerrillas simply melted away, only to reappear a few days later somewhere else, soon to return to the same district as before.

The morale of the government was equally uncertain. Communist lands were very near; Britain was embarrassed by financial difficulties; the United States was far away. No one was